

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

MAO-LI-DZI

CHINESE CLIMBING PLUM

(ACTINIDIA) Probably a New Species



FOR MANY YEARS I have been in correspondence with numerous stations in Japan, Corea and China regarding the various species and varieties of Actinidia, all of which are strong growing, hardy deciduous climbing or trailing shrubs or vines, remarkably free from insects and fungi, and unsurpassed for covering arbors, screens, walls and low buildings.

The long slender vines of Actinidia agrita of Corea and Manchuria are much used for cords and ropes and several of the species are used in the manufacture of paper; but the fruit of some of the species and especially of certain wild **Varieties** is most delicious and much sought for by those who know it. It grows in clusters along the vines often burying itself in loose earth or under leaves like the peanut.



FRUITING BRANCH OF MAO-LI-DZI VINE (Greatly Reduced)

The fruit ripens in September and October varying in size and shape, generally about like a plum in size and appearance with a thin brown downy skin like the peach, having the general appearance of an oval white fig or guava. The seeds however are much smaller and more like strawberry seeds.

The flavor of the light green flesh is unique but most resembling a strawberry, and like the strawberry is delicious to eat raw and excellent when cooked.

After testing the various fruit bearing Actinidias extensively from Corea, and the high mountains of Central and Western China, an extremely hardy, rapid growing variety, which bears most delicious fruit and is as easily grown as grapes or strawberries, was found in Western China among the high mountains of an almost wholly unexplored region, thriving best in soils and locations where moisture is at hand.

The specific name of this species has not yet been determined, the natives calling it **Mao-li-dzi** which means "**Hairy Plum.**"

The "**Yang-Tao**" of Central China also called "**Hairy Plum**" has much wider and shorter leaves which are densely covered with greenish crimson hairs. This requires more heat and moisture and is more difficult to raise than the Mao-li-dzi vine. Both species grow about forty miles from Kiatingfu in far Western China.

I add part of a letter from my collector which will be of interest.

"Dear Mr. Burbank:—

We have here in West China a fruit that the natives call the mao-li-dzi or "hairy plum" of which we are very fond. I never heard of it before coming out here, and I am told that it is not found in other parts of the world. The fruit grows on a vine and is about the size of a plum. The skin is thin, brown, and hairy like a peach skin. The meaty part is bright green and in the center there are small seeds about like strawberry seeds. The taste is similar to that of a strawberry. This fruit is delicious to eat raw and is also good when cooked. I believe it should be introduced into the United States. The fruit comes in along in September.

These seeds came from a place about forty miles from here, back in the mountains, at an altitude of about 5000 feet. We are all very fond of it and have tried to get the Chinese up in that region to make a business of growing them for us. But thus far we have had to depend upon what they gather as they grow wild in the mountains.

The vine resembles the grape vine and climbs over the underbrush on the mountain side. It is of course very hardy. The leaves are large. I hope you will succeed in making these seeds grow."

STRONG PLANTS NOW READY

"**MAO-LI-DZI**"—The hardy Western Chinese mountain "hairy plum," young vigorous yearling well rooted vines, price each 75c, per 10 \$4.00, per 100 \$25.00.

"**YANG-TAO**"—From Central China, not as hardy. Well grown young plants with a good system of roots, price each \$1.00.

"**TARA**"—(Actinidia agrita) the Corean species, price each \$1.00.

The price of the two last is greater because more difficult to grow. The Mao-li-dzi grows as freely as strawberries.

LUTHER BURBANK,

Burbank's Experiment Farms
December, 1910.

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA,

U. S. A.

